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ABSTRACT

This study stresses the need to improve the quality of civic education at all levels within the educational system in the United States. The book provides a theory for the practice of citizenship that enlists the support of a broad spectrum of the diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups that must live and work together. The volume contends that the civic mission of education can be served best if schools concentrate on those civic values that citizens hold in common. This core of shared beliefs would then be supported by differing groups whose values are grounded in their own particular theology, moral law, or natural law without imposing those grounds of faith or belief on others, especially not through a powerful centralized government. The book illustrates that the theme of citizenship could become a binding and revivifying element in a common core of studies, giving a scholarly foundation to moral and civic education and providing a common ground for the pluralistic society that has contributed to the unique fabric of life. Part 1 provides historical perspective on the changing roles of families, schools, and communities in education for citizenship; on the competing claims of civic cohesion, pluralism, and modernization; and on the diminishing role of civic purpose in public schooling. Part 2 discusses the attempts to revitalize the civic mission of education in recent decades, not only in the schools but in the liberal and professional education of all teachers and administrators. (RJC)

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